

The British Museum Library and the Development of the International Exchange of Official Documents

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The British Museum had been authorized by an Act of Parliament as early as 1767 ‘to exchange, sell or dispose of any duplicates of printed books’.¹ This permission was used mainly to sell second copies of valuable works in order to provide funds to purchase books ‘that may be wanting in, or proper for the ... museum’. However, many of the items sold, especially early printed books, were not true duplicates. Therefore, it is not surprising that Antonio Panizzi,² when he became Keeper of the Department of Printed Books, sought to end the practice. Since then occasional exchanges of valuable duplicates have been arranged from time to time but such activities have never been regular or substantial.³ It is with the exchange of government documents, a method of acquisition which was given formal recognition in the 1880s, that this article is mainly concerned.

Early in the nineteenth century governments had become aware that their printed records were of interest to foreign administrations. In July 1832 the Chancellor of the Exchequer noted in a Treasury minute a proposal that ‘all new literary publications’ be exchanged between the British Museum Library and that of the Bibliothèque du Roi.

¹ 7 Geo. III, c. 18, 1766. The main sources of information are reports, memoranda and correspondence in the archives of the Department of Printed Books (DPB), which form part of the British Library’s Archives. General background information has also been taken from *International Exchange of Government Publications*, ‘For use in H.M. Stationery Office Only’, compiled by Geoffrey C. Lockwood, H.M.S.O., 1964, which provides a useful guide to the evolution of exchange arrangements at the British Museum. Lockwood was Executive Officer, responsible in the Stationery Office from 1960 to 1962 for the conduct of International Exchange and this work summarizes the history of the international exchange of government publications by Great Britain. A more general history of ‘International Book Exchange’, is found in *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, vol. xii (New York, 1974), pp. 257-77, compiled by A. Allardyce, late of the British Library Lending Division, researched by I. Sternberg with a contribution on official publication exchanges of the British Museum Library from R. A. Christophers. Dr Christophers also contributed papers on the subject to meetings of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) held in Liverpool, 1971, and in Vienna, 1972. The latter paper ‘Exchange of Publications with the Developing Countries: the experience of the British Museum... (English-speaking African countries)’ was published in Maria J. Schiltman (ed.), *The International Exchange of Publications: proceedings of the European Conference... 24-29 April 1972* (Pullach / München, 1973), pp. 80-5. There are also some useful references in my previous articles, *British Library Journal*, xvii (1991), pp. 61-82 and 151-66.

² Keeper, 1837-56; Principal Librarian, 1856-66.

³ For example *Acquisitions of Special Interest. Exchanges*. ‘From the Bodleian Library, 31 Incunabula ... From the Law Library of Harvard University, three English books... From the Governors of St Bride’s Institute, two copies of a sheet ... printed at Westminster by William Caxton’, *British Museum. Account of the Income and Expenditure ... for the year ending 31 March 1914, Parliamentary Papers, Accounts and Papers*, lxxi, 193, 1914, pp. 219-21. In exchange the Bodleian received thirty-five incunabula, Harvard books to an equivalent monetary value and St Bride’s Institute a copy of the British Museum *Catalogue of XVth Century Books*. DPB, DH2/77, 24 May, 12 July, and 13 Dec. 1913, 35-9.

Also that the lower Houses of the British and the French Parliaments should exchange their parliamentary publications and proceedings. These proposals did not materialize.⁴ By the middle of the century sporadic distribution and exchanges of the official reports of legislative and executive bodies were widespread. International pressure leading to the more general exchange of government documents for library retention rather than departmental use had been increasing since 1867 when the United States Congress empowered the Smithsonian Institution to receive up to fifty copies of all United States government documents with which they could negotiate complete reciprocal exchanges with foreign governments.⁵ Finally, between 1877 and 1883, a series of conferences was held which resulted in two Brussels Conventions of 1886. These defined the international exchange system for nearly three-quarters of a century on what was called the 'Smithsonian model'. As suggested by that Institution the first convention provided for the establishment of national exchange centres which would receive and forward packages; for the exchange of both parliamentary and administrative documents and of works officially sponsored as well as an annual list of such works; for the standardization of exchange practices; and proposed that packing and transport should be free (although sea transport expenses were to be negotiated). The second convention was specifically for exchanges of public official documents between Parliaments.⁶ Great Britain was neither represented at Brussels in 1886 nor was she a signatory to the Conventions.

In November 1875 the Smithsonian Institution offered the Foreign Office an:

exchange ... [of] a complete series of [Government] publications, to include documents of special bureaus or departments, as well as the general publications, of whatever nature, printed at the public expense, and also ... all ... works ... published by booksellers with the aid of grants or subscriptions from Governments.⁷

The Foreign Office referred the proposal to the Treasury who in turn consulted the British Museum. At that time, Museum officials frequently purchased such documents.⁸ In spite of interest in the proposals shown by both organizations, the Treasury apparently did not wish to proceed with the matter and informed the Foreign Office that 'my Lords are not disposed to encourage, without practical necessity, the interchange of public documents'.⁹ The Smithsonian Institution refused to accept this response as final and approached the Foreign Office again both in 1878 and in 1879. The latter submitted these applications to the Treasury which, although still averse to the idea, referred them to the Museum as the British Embassy in Washington had warned that the Smithsonian might cease 'the donation of sets of publications which had been made since 1876 to [both] the British Museum and the Museum of Science and Art in Edinburgh, in anticipation of such an agreement'. Then in March 1880 the Treasury reconsidered its opposition believing that 'by obtaining publications by exchange rather than purchase, a considerable saving would be ... [possible in] the British Museum's Vote for the purchase of books'. After some

⁴ Edward Edwards, *Memoirs of Libraries* (London, 1859), vol. ii, pp. 622-3.

⁵ *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution ... 1867* (Washington, 1868), pp. 39 and 71.

⁶ 'International Book Exchange', op. cit., pp. 263, 268-9.

⁷ *International Exchange of Government Publications*, p. 1.

⁸ It is interesting to note that according to the Smithsonian annual report, between 1853 and 1860 Henry Stevens, the British Museum's main agent for the purchase of Americana, was also the distribution agent in London for Smithsonian publications sent on exchanges.

⁹ *International Exchange of Government Publications*, p. 1.

hesitation and further consultations with the Foreign Office it was decided that a committee should be set up under the chairmanship of Sir Edward Hertslet¹⁰ 'to consider the whole question of the exchange of public documents with foreign states'.¹¹

A memorandum on *State Papers* laid before the Trustees by the Principal Librarian, Bond,¹² on 9 October 1880 stated that a Treasury letter of 29 September concerning the international exchange of State Papers asked whether they, the Trustees, would appoint their Librarian (or some one else) to represent the Museum on a committee 'to be appointed to consider the report on this question'.¹³ The Trustees 'strongly recommended that endeavours should be made to effect an interchange of publications' and indicated that Bullen, the Keeper of Printed Books,¹⁴ would serve on the Committee which was formally appointed by a Treasury minute of 19 November 1880.¹⁵ The Committee reported on 30 October 1882 that

We find that for many years past there has been a considerable exchange of Official Publications of various kinds between the British and Foreign Governments ... [but they] were regulated by no principle

Regarding the application of the Smithsonian Institution, originally made in 1873 and repeated a number of times since, the report continued that it afforded a good opportunity for placing applications for such exchanges on a 'more definite footing'. The Committee found that it was hard to form a trustworthy estimate of the quantity of official documents printed by foreign governments, but thought that there might be about 1,200 volumes a year, a large number of which were not for sale. Of those which were, the selling price often could not be accurately ascertained. However, it appeared evident, from the numerous applications received, that importance was attached abroad to the receipt of British government documents. The Committee thought, therefore, that it would be impossible totally to decline the approach. Also, as the British Museum wanted to have 'a complete and authentic set of Foreign Official Publications' the members decided that 'a reciprocal interchange [was] within certain limits, desirable'. With the Museum in mind they suggested the supply of 'a complete set of the English Official Publications' to governments of any independent foreign states which might desire them, providing such governments would undertake to send a complete set of its own publications for the use of the British Museum Library. A 'complete' set of English official documents was to include:

- (a) Papers of all kinds printed for or presented to either House of Parliament;
- (b) Historical, scientific, or antiquarian works published by the Government, such as the Record Office Publications;
- (c) Maps or charts, published by Government;
- (d) Departmental publications which are placed on sale.

The 'completeness' of the foreign series would, of course, have to be left to the 'good faith' of the respective governments.

¹⁰ Librarian and Keeper of Archives, Foreign Office, 1857-94.

¹¹ *International Exchange of Government Publications*, pp. 2-3.

¹² Sir Edward Augustus Bond, Keeper, Department of Manuscripts, 1866-78; Principal Librarian, 1878-88.

¹³ DPB, DH2/24, Sect. I, 9 Oct. 1880, 13 a, *State Papers*.

¹⁴ Keeper, 1875-90.

¹⁵ The Committee consisted of Sir Edward Hertslet, *Chairman*; Sir (Thomas) Digby Pigott, Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, 1877-1905; James Heard Pulman, Librarian to the House of Lords, 1862-97; George James Howard, Earl of Carlisle, Liberal M.P., 1879-85; Sir William Hardy, Deputy Keeper, Public Record Office, 1878-86; George Bullen, British Museum; and Stephen Edward Spring-Rice, Principal Clerk H.M. Treasury, Private Secretary to successive Financial Secretaries to the Treasury, 1881-8, *Secretary*.

The question of a 'general' or 'national' exchange having been settled, the question of 'special' or 'departmental' exchanges was also considered. The Committee recommended that application for gifts or special classes of British official publications be 'favourably entertained', but, when sent, they should be accompanied by a request that works of a similar nature be supplied in return. They further recommended that all these arrangements should extend to the colonies and India 'in the same manner as to Foreign States'.¹⁶ (It should be noted that according to Colonial Office regulation no. 261 copies of the 'British Statutes' had, since 1868, been sent to Colonial Governors 'for the use of the Colonial Legislatures and Courts of Justice'.)¹⁷

The adoption of such a scheme, it was felt, would not result in any appreciable expense, unless it should lead to 'a considerable increase in the number of free grants of complete sets of Parliamentary Papers *in volumes*, the compilation and binding of which [was] very costly'. The extra accommodation required at the British Museum would be 'trifling', as the whole annual bulk of foreign, colonial, and Indian official documents was small, compared with the number of books (about 30,000) added annually to the national collection. In any case a considerable number of these publications were already being acquired. Thus the British Museum would be relieved of the cost of its present purchases (about £150 per annum being approximately 1.5% of the then book fund); and the existence of a complete collection of international state papers at the Museum would 'facilitate the labours of the heads of the Intelligence Department of the War Office and of those holding similar posts elsewhere'. Also it would discourage the growth of departmental libraries. Where an exchange was agreed, the Stationery Office would undertake to 'pack the papers sent from England and despatch them from time to time', whereas the documents from abroad could be addressed directly to the British Museum.¹⁸

In September 1883 a report on *Exchange of Publications with Foreign Governments* was submitted to the Trustees and again they made recommendation for a general system of exchange with independent governments and self-governing colonies and reaffirmed that the arrangements should also 'apply to India and the Colonies'. By then complete exchanges of official publications had already been effected with the governments of the United States and the Cape Colony. To avoid full sets of United Kingdom government documents being exchanged for 'incomplete [collections] or, after a time, no publications' from other governments the Trustees had to certify to the Controller of the Stationery Office before the end of the calendar year that in the preceding year a 'complete set' had been received from each foreign or colonial government with which a full exchange had been undertaken. If the appropriate publications were not sent, the Treasury reserved the right to suspend the arrangement.¹⁹

By 1898 Treasury-sanctioned exchanges had been entered into with six foreign countries and eight colonies. The early exchanges were agreed primarily with Western European

¹⁶ *International Exchange of Government Publications*, Appendix 1, pp. 20-4, *Report* [of the Committee].

¹⁷ *Colonial Office List*, 1868. For more details of the effects of Colonial Office regulation no. 261 see my 'The British Museum Library and Colonial Copyright Deposit', *British Library Journal*, xvii (1991), pp. 61-82.

¹⁸ *International Exchange of Government Publications*, Appendix 1.

¹⁹ DPB, DH2/30, Sect. I, 17, Copy of a Treasury Minute dated 17 Sept. 1883.

countries and with colonies of European settlement. None were enacted with Asian or Caribbean countries and only those with Chile and the Cape Colony were with countries of Latin America or Africa.²⁰ In 1920 the Treasury passed to H.M. Stationery Office full responsibility for ensuring that exchanges were concluded and maintained on a basis of parity between publications sent and received.²¹

The League of Nations Committee on Intellectual Co-operation took up the matter of exchanges in 1922. The Council of the League passed a resolution appealing to countries which had not adhered to the Brussels Convention to do so, but still Great Britain did not accede. That Committee later convened a Committee of Experts who met at Geneva from 17 to 19 July 1924 and produced a revision of the Convention which it hoped would be more generally acceptable. B. M. Headicar, Librarian of the London School of Economics, was the British 'expert'.²² The League Assembly communicated the revised convention to its members. Again the proposals involved the use of a central exchange service in each country, and additionally the employment of high grade officials. The British government replied to the League in March 1925 that it did not regard the proposals favourably, but repeated an earlier offer to exchange official publications up to a maximum annual value with provision for negotiating about this sum on a reciprocal basis. In any case learned institutions in the United Kingdom already had exchange arrangements of their own.²³ It does not appear that the British Government consulted officers of the Museum for their opinion during these negotiations, but the Colonial Office was obviously made aware of them. When the colonial regulations of 1908 were revised in 1929 the regulation which indicated that it was 'desirable' that colonial governments should arrange for the interchange of reports was strengthened to read that 'Colonial Governments should arrange ...'.²⁴

²⁰ DPB, DH2/60, Sect. III, July 1898, Copy of a letter from the Department of Printed Books (Richard Garnett [?], Keeper, 1890-9) to Sir Edward Thompson (Keeper, Department of Manuscripts, 1878-88; Principal Librarian, 1888-1909) for transmission to the Treasury. This confirmed that collections of official documents had been received during the year from six foreign countries and eight colonies. The complete list of exchange partners was:

Foreign Countries	Colonies
1. Austria	1. Canada
2. Chile	2. Cape Colony
3. France	3. N. S. Wales
4. Italy	4. N. Zealand
5. Norway	5. Queensland
6. U.S.A.	6. S. Australia
	7. Tasmania
	8. Victoria

²¹ *International Exchange of Government Publications*, p. 7 and Appendix 5.

²² League of Nations, Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, *Minutes of the Committee of Experts on the International Exchange of Publications* (Geneva, 1924). Bertie Mason Headicar (1875-1958) was Librarian of the London School of Economics, 1910-35, and Head of the Inter-Allied Book Centre, the precursor of the British National Book Centre (BNBC), the equivalent of a British 'national' exchange centre, 1944. BNBC later became the British Library Gift and Exchange Centre, Boston Spa.

²³ Information in this paragraph is taken from 'International Book Exchange', op. cit., and an anonymous memorandum held in a departmental file on 'International Exchange Conventions' *History and present position of the International Exchange of Publications in Great Britain* signed H.M. Stationery Office, 5 Nov. 1955.

²⁴ *Colonial Office List*, regulation no. 191, 1908, and regulation no. 180, 1929.

From that time until the end of the Second World War only about half a dozen more exchanges were entered into with foreign countries and a similar number with the colonies. These exchanges were in many instances complete intergovernmental exchanges, with the Museum offering H.M.S.O. publications, usually to the Parliament Library or its equivalent in the recipient country. In return a complete or nearly complete set of the official publications was sent from the foreign country or colony. These arrangements were often initiated at ministerial level and had to have Treasury approval before the Museum could agree to them.

At the same time exchanges were gaining favour generally. When funds for running the British Museum were deficient at the beginning of the twentieth century, staff of the Library widened exchanges to include universities, societies, and other organizations from which the Museum Library wished to ensure a regular supply of publications. By 1938 there were exchanges with some 117 libraries, societies, etc. By 1950 there were about 131 agreements. It is likely that some of the bodies were liable to send their publications by legal deposit and others probably donated some publications. Nevertheless the Museum sometimes required second copies of such works and those were exchanged for H.M.S.O. or British Museum publications. Following the Second World War financial difficulties encouraged libraries in countries with soft currency to offer a wide range of their countries' publications on barter exchange (that is they would exchange any desirable works in exchange for British commercial publications). Many organizations, British establishments as well as foreign institutions, sent their journals or other documents to the Museum and sought to obtain British Museum publications in return. The list of exchanges (see Appendix 2) into which the Museum had entered by 1938 (revised in 1950, Appendix 3) shows the great variety of institutions from which publications were sought and received. Some confusion as to which documents were received by official exchange and which were received by institutional exchange or donation appears to have arisen during the 1930s. There is evidence from the registers of international exchange receipts that the Museum and H.M.S.O. did not always agree on which countries were included in the formal exchange arrangements. A letter of 10 April 1935 from G. Allard of H.M.S.O. to E. D. Burt at the Museum²⁵ inserted in the register for Brazil informs Burt that

With reference to the British Museum letter of the 5th ultimo enclosing a list of Foreign and Colonial Governments which have supplied official publications I shall be glad if you will note that no exchange is in operation with Brazil.

There is a pencil note in a number of other registers to the same effect.

Until the formation of the British Library the British Museum Trustees had annually to assure the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office that parity had been achieved. Many of the countries of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America were either dependent territories under British colonial administration and, therefore, sent government documents in compliance with Colonial Office or India Office regulations or they were dependencies of France, the Netherlands, Portugal, etc. and thus their government documents were received as part of an exchange with the administering country. A substantial number of smaller exchanges were commenced in the late 1940s and early 1950s. By 1955 exchanges had been concluded with forty commonwealth, colonial or foreign countries, nine with provinces in commonwealth or foreign states and one with the U.N. Library (see Appendix 4).

The membership of UNESCO agreed a Convention in 1958 to regulate the exchange of official publications and government documents between states. This proved more flexible (Article 4, para. 2, stipulating that 'each contracting state shall give its national exchange service or the central exchange authorities the powers required to obtain the

²⁵ G. Allard, Clerical Officer (Supplies) H.M.S.O., 1935-46, Deputy Director, Supplies, 1947-8, to Edward Droughton Burt, Clerk, Higher Grade, British Museum, 1931-8.

material to be exchanged and sufficient financial means to carry out the functions of exchange’) and in 1961 H.M. Government felt able to accede to that instrument. Exchanges were invariably offered to the newly independent ex-colonial states and during the early 1960s these were generally given preferential treatment. In a letter to J. R. McKay of Her Majesty’s Stationery Office,²⁶ regarding the British Museum’s request that the Foreign Office enter into negotiation for exchanges of official publications with twelve African countries (mainly former French colonies) Miss E. C. Blayney²⁷ stated

For the twelve countries which I have mentioned it is clear that difficulties will arise from the value-for-value requirement. There is a definite Foreign Office interest in the success of the negotiations with these countries and it would assist the negotiations very considerably if we could allow these countries a balance in their favour of say £20-£25 annually, provided a reasonable number of publications are received from the foreign country concerned.²⁸

However, the response to British Museum initiatives was poor and as noted by Christophers

only five [African] states [maintained] large-scale exchange agreements with Great Britain ... Four of the five full exchanges [had] grown out of the conversion, at the instances of local librarians, of old Colonial Office deposits into exchanges.²⁹

By 1972 the British Museum had some 350 exchange partners and it was estimated that during 1971 about £50,000 worth of material was sent abroad by H.M.S.O. in exchange. The exchanges fell into nine categories, namely:-

- (1) Complete reciprocal exchanges of all official publications on both sides. These existed only for large countries such as the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A., France, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and (for historical reasons) its individual states.
- (2) Large exchanges, not complete on either side but including all significant material, e.g. East and West Germany, Japan, Denmark, Sweden, Spain and India.
- (3) Exchanges with smaller countries which sent all their significant publications but, as they were not numerous, received only a selection of the British output, e.g. Nigeria, Kenya, Luxembourg, etc. (some twenty or more countries).
- (4) Exchanges with individual departments, institutes, laboratories. etc. for their own publications, whether complementary to, or in default of, any central exchanges.
- (5) Exchanges with U.N. libraries. The British Museum Library was a depository for U.N. publications, and those of its agencies. In return for depository status U.N. libraries had the right to call upon the government printer of member countries for publications. The British Museum was not directly involved in meeting such requests.
- (6) Exchanges with national museums, universities and learned societies to which British Museum publications were sent in return. There were about 200 of these. Certain official bodies also received B.M. publications and, conversely, some universities and societies (particularly those of a national character) received H.M.S.O. publications in return.

²⁶ J. R. McKay, Assistant Director, Publications Division, H.M.S.O., 1956-63.

²⁷ Eily C. Blayney, Head of the Foreign Office Printed Library, 1960-8.

²⁸ Letters dated 1962 in a departmental H.M.S.O. exchange file. The countries were: Mauritania, Upper Volta, Central African Republic, Niger, Cameroun, Gabon, Chad, Republic of Congo (formerly French Congo), Mali, Senegal, Guinea, and Somali Republic. After referral to the Treasury it was decided that in ‘special circumstances’ an adverse imbalance could be accepted but every effort should be made to limit it to £20.

²⁹ ‘The experience of the British Museum... (English-speaking African countries)’, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

- (7) H.M.S.O. 'Agency' publications. If these publications, mostly those of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Agency and international bodies, were requested, they could be sent, but the Museum had to pay for them. A discount of twenty-five per cent was allowed, but postage had to be paid.
- (8) Where currency problems did not permit acquisition by other means or if no suitable H.M.S.O. publications could be found, exchange partners could request that the British Museum send British non-official publications as an alternative. These were purchased with monies from the book fund and usually despatched direct by the supplier to the requesting library.
- (9) Exchanges which included official publications issued by commercial bodies had to be paid for as in category (7).³⁰

The British Museum Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books also became involved in the implementation of exchange agreements. In 1973 the responsibility for controlling the exchange of official documents passed to the new British Library. At first attempts were made to limit expenditure but, as this proved increasingly difficult to monitor, since 1990 exchanges which included the despatch of H.M.S.O. publications have been largely curtailed. Although the Slavonic and Oriental Departments continued to supply their exchange partners with some H.M.S.O. titles, whenever possible the Chadwyck Healey microform version of British government documents and/or British Library publications are sent in fulfilment of exchange agreements. With the general reassessment of collecting policies then taking place and as Slavonic and Asian countries move rapidly towards market economies, the criterion of exchange as the only viable means of collecting from certain countries was no longer as valid. Since the operation of exchanges was not only a staff-intensive procedure but the resulting collections were often incomplete and include unwanted works, the exchange of publications is no longer considered as a supplement to an inadequate book fund.

Appendix 1

International Exchange Registers held in the archives of the British Library, 1886-1953³¹

Country	Date	No. of Receipts ³²
Australia	July 1902-July 1931	259
	April 1946-February 1953	520
Austria	September 1887-June 1890	6
	October 1890-July 1938	61
	February 1952	1
Baden	September 1913-November 1930	16
	November 1950-November 1951	8
Bavaria ³³	September 1913-March 1935	80

³⁰ From a departmental paper 'Cost Accountability and International Exchanges' compiled by R. A. Christophers, Assistant Keeper, State Paper Room, July 1972.

³¹ From 1953 on, serial material was recorded on kardex and registers fell out of use.

³² As with government document donations the number of items per receipt varies from one to many.

³³ Not an exchange according to H.M.S.O. 10 April 1935.

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Belgium	December 1950-November 1952	13
Bolivia	September 1949-December 1950	3
Brazil ³⁴	April 1912-January 1935	81
	July 1948-August 1952	111
Canada	November 1907-December 1908	356
	April 1909-June 1911	416
	June 1911-February 1918	246
	February 1918-November 1934	247-698
	October 1948-April 1953	295
Cape Town	July 1890-October 1913	106
Ceylon	May 1950-November 1951	32
Chile	August 1886-June 1890	17
	July 1890-November 1907	284
	October 1908-September 1937	261
	November 1937-July 1951	34
Connecticut	April 1936-July 1954	93
Czecho-Slovakia	May 1947-June 1951	382
Denmark	July 1949-September 1951	35
Finland	August 1949-September 1951	28
France	July 1886-June 1890	55
German GDR	March 1950-April 1952	34
German BRD	February 1950-November 1951	7
Hesse	May-November 1951	3
Hungary	July 1947-December 1949	5
Italy	July 1886-June 1890	40
	December 1890-January 1932	227
	February 1932-July 1950 ³⁵	227
	April 1947-December 1951	14
Japan	March 1950-December 1951	25
Netherlands ³⁶	November 1927-August 1937	133
	September 1937-October 1955 ³⁷	135
Newfoundland	December 1935-January 1952	51
New South Wales	June 1892-November 1925	268
	November 1925-November 1943	490
	April 1946-December 1951	139
New Zealand	July 1890-February 1935	251
	December 1949-March 1953	166
Norway	March 1892-May 1939	81
Poland	April 1937-November 1951	111
Portugal	July 1946-November 1951	13
Philippine Republic	November 1951-December 1952	5

³⁴ No exchange, H.M.S.O. 10 April 1935.

³⁵ Nothing received August 1938-July 1940.

³⁶ A letter of October 1927 states that it was the first the British Museum knew of the arrangement.

³⁷ There are also packing sheets for numerous consignments pasted into the receipt book.

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Queensland	July 1890-October 1932	271
	December 1932-December 1951	181
Saxony ³⁸	September 1913-September 1934	28
South Africa (Union) ³⁹	February 1914-November 1936	409
South Australia	December 1890-March 1936	185
	April 1936-December 1951	69
Southern Rhodesia ⁴⁰	November 1926-August 1939	91
	April 1946-November 1952	122
Spain	December 1926-March 1941	84
	August 1947-March 1949	7
	March 1950-August 1952	10
Sweden	January 1934-December 1952	178
Switzerland	May 1949-December 1951	16
Tasmania	April 1946-November 1951	60
Turkey	January 1949-December 1951	19
U.S.A.	July 1886-June 1890	115
	July 1890-February 1916	263
	February 1916-April 1932	264-577
	April 1932-February 1936	259
	March 1936-February 1948 ⁴¹	355
	February 1948-December 1950	390
	February 1951-August 1953	130
Uruguay	October 1951-March 1952	2
Venezuela	May 1951	1
Victoria	July 1890-May 1916	264
Western Australia	November 1909-May 1946	186
Wurtemberg	April 1913-June 1928	23

³⁸ No exchange, H.M.S.O. 10 April 1935.

³⁹ Note states: 'in future all South African Government publications are to be treated as received under the Union Copyright Act.'

⁴⁰ Memo of 13 Dec. 1926: 'as a result of an interview with Stationery Office representatives Southern Rhodesia Government publications are to be treated as exchanges'.

⁴¹ There were no shipments between February 1940 and December 1944, but in a letter of 22 Jan. 1944 from C. G. Abbot, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution, to F. D. Cooper, British Museum, it is stated that thirty-nine boxes had been accumulated 'since the suspension of shipments in the early days of the war'.

Appendix 2

Old List (1938) of Institutions with which the Department of Printed Books or the Museum [had] a more or less regular exchange⁴²

Town	Institution
Calcutta	*Imperial Library +Indian Museum (Oriental Catalogues) +Asiatic Society of Bengal (Oriental Catalogues)
Cambridge	Corpus Christi College (MSS. and Coins) Fitzwilliam Museum Museum of Classical Archaeology
Canberra	*Parliamentary Library
Cape Town	!South African Public Library !University Library
Cardiff	National Museum of Wales University of South Wales
Copenhagen	*Royal Library
Cork	University College
Cracow	#Bibljotska Jagiellonska
Dresden	*Landesbibliothek
Dublin	National Library of Ireland Royal Irish Academy
Durham	Cathedral Library (MSS.) University
Edinburgh	Royal Scottish Museum Royal Society Signet Library Society of Antiquaries University
Exeter	See Public Libraries
Florence	Biblioteca Mediceo Laurenziana (MSS.) *R. Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale
Galway	University College
Glasgow	Art Gallery and Museum (Kelvingrove) University
Gottingen	University
Guernsey	Guille Alles Library
Hague	*Royal Library
Halle	Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft
Heidelberg	University
Helsingfors	Universitetsbiblioteket
Hobart Town	Tasmanian Public Library
Hull	University College

⁴² Taken from a list in the Departmental Reports (DH2/115 : 520, 1950) used to respond to a request dated 21 Nov. 1949 for information from the Museum Secretary, about 'libraries and universities which distributed their own publications ... as part of what might be said to constitute a regular exchange'. The list was to include all Museums and Libraries which sent publications regularly but not *ad hoc* arrangements. The 'old' list was annotated and a new list was drawn up. The following symbols represent some of the annotations - * received by SPR; + received by OPB; ! treated as South African copyright; # received by the Slavonic Branch.

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Istanbul	+Musées des Antiquités National Library (Milliyet Kutiephanesi)
Java	Society of Arts and Sciences of Batavia
Jersey	Public Library of the States
Jerusalem	Department of Antiquities
Khartum	Library
Kiev	#Ukraine National Library
Kimberley	!Public Library
Lampeter	St David's College
Leeds	University
Leicester	University College
Leningrad	#Gosudarstvennaja Publicnaja Biblioteka
Lisbon	National Library
Liverpool	University
London	Antiquaries, Society of Bedford College Birkbeck College *Board (Ministry) of Education Courtauld Institute Dr Williams Library Guildhall Library Hellenic Society *House of Commons (duplicates) *House of Lords (duplicates) *Imperial Institute *India Office Institute of Historical Research King's College Lambeth (Palace) Library London Library London School of Economics Museums' Association National Art Library (Victoria & Albert Museum) National Central Library National Gallery National Portrait Gallery Numismatic Society Page Memorial Library (English-Speaking Union) Patent Office Polytechnic *Public Record Office (duplicate set) Royal Academy Royal Empire Society Royal Institution of Great Britain Royal Institute of International Affairs Royal Society School of Oriental Studies Science Museum Sion College University College University Victoria & Albert Museum Westfield College

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Madras	*Government Central Museum (Oriental Catalogues) Royal Asiatic Society *University Library
Madrid	*Biblioteca Nacional
Manchester	Chetham's Library John Rylands Library Victoria University
Melbourne	*Public Library University
Milan	Ambrosian Library (Catalogues of Manuscripts)
Montreal	McGill University
Moscow	#Lenin Memorial Library
Munich	*Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
New York	Metropolitan Museum of Art Public Library
Newcastle	King's College
Nicosia	*Department of Antiquities ... Cyprus
Nottingham	University College
Oslo	*K. Universitetsbiblioteket
Ottawa	*Library of Parliament
Oxford	Ashmolean Museum Indian Institute
Paris	Société Asiatique *Bibliothèque Nationale, Departement des Imprimés *— Cabinet des Médailles (Coins) Institut de France Ecole Nationale des Chartes (Catalogues of Manuscripts) Ecole Speciale des Langues Orientales Vivantes Archives du Ministère de la Guerre – Section Historique
Peiping	National Library
Perth, W.A.	*Public Library of W. Australia
Prague	University Library
Port Elizabeth	!Public Library
Pretoria	!State Library
Reading	University
Rome	Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele British School
St Andrews	University
Sheffield	University Library
Southampton	University College
Stockholm	*Royal Library of Sweden
Sydney	*Public Library of New South Wales University
Tokyo	Imperial Library
Toronto	Public Library University
Turin	National Library
Uppsala	University
Valletta	Public Library
Vatican City	Vatican Library
Victoria (B.C.)	*Legislative Assembly
Vienna	National Library
Warsaw	Polish National Library

Washington	*Library of Congress Smithsonian Institution
Wellington, N.Z.	*Parliamentary Library
Windsor Castle	His Majesty's Library
Witwatersrand	!University Library
Woolwich	Royal Artillery Library
Worksop	Welbeck Abbey (Duke of Portland)
Zurich	Stadtbibliothek

Appendix 3

List of Libraries, Museums, etc., sending their publications regularly to the Department of Printed Books by way of exchange⁴³

Aarhus	Universitets & Staatsbiblioteket
Aberdeen	University
Adelaide	Public Library Royal Society of South Australia University
Abo	Akademi
Ann Arbor (U.S.)	Michigan University
Auckland (N.Z.)	Auckland University College
Austin (Texas)	University of Texas
Baltimore	Johns Hopkins University & Hospital
Basel	University
Batavia	Kon. Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen
Belgrade	University Library
Bern	Bibliothèque Centrale Fédérale
Bloomington	Indiana University
Bombay	Royal Asiatic Society (Bombay Branch)
Boston	Museum of Fine Arts
Boulder	University of Colorado
Brisbane	Queensland Museum
Brno	Masarykova University Regional & University Library Zemské Museum
Brooklyn	Brooklyn Museum
Brussels	Académie Royale de Belgique Académie Royale de Langue et de Littérature Françaises Musées Royaux des Beaux Arts de Belgique
Budapest	Hungarian Libraries Board Orazgos Szechenyi Konyvtar, Magyar Nemzeti Museum Pazmany Peter Tudományigjetem Belsoazsiai Intezite
Bucharest	Institut de Documentation, Bibliographie et Editions Techniques Biblioteca Academie Republicii Populare
Buenos Aires	Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes y Letras University

⁴³ DPB, DH2/115: 514-19, signed C. B. Oldman, 2 May 1950.

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Cambridge	Fitzwilliam Museum
Canberra	Commonwealth Parliament & National Library
Chapel Hill	University of North Carolina
Charlottesville	University of Virginia
Coimbra	University
Ciudad Trujillo	University
Cleveland	Cleveland Museum of Art
Columbia	University of Missouri
Columbus	Ohio State University
Copenhagen	Det Danske Videnskabernes Selskab Royal Library
Cracow	Polska Akademia Umiejetnosci Studium Slowianskie Uniwersytetu Jagiellonskiego
Dakar	Institut Français d'Afrique Noire
Edinburgh	Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
Evanston	Northwestern University
Fribourg	Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire
Florence	Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale
Göteborg	Kungl. Vetenskaps och Vitterhets Samhalles Museum Stadsbibliotek
Gdansk	Instytut Bałtycki
Göttingen	University
Habana	Academia Nacional de Arte y Letras
Hague	The Royal Library
Halle	University and Town Library
Hamburg	Museum für Kunste und Gewerbe University and Town Library
Harvard	University
Heidelberg	University
Helsinki	Juridiska Foreningen i Finland Geologinen Tutkimuslaitos Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland
Hobart	Royal Society of Tasmania
Iowa City	Iowa University
Leiden	University
Leningrad	Gosudarstvennaya Publichnaya Biblioteka imeni M. E. Saltukova-Shchedrina Library of the Academy of Sciences U.S.S.R.
Lexington	University of Kentucky (M. I. King Library)
Lincoln (U.S.A.)	Nebraska University
Lodz	Biblioteka Uniwersytetu
London	London School of Economics Public Record Office Royal Empire Society Royal Institute of International Affairs Royal Society Society of Antiquaries
Lund	University
Madrid	Real Academia Española
Malmo	Museum
Melbourne	Royal Society of Victoria
Mexico	Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

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Moscow	Fundamental'naya Biblioteka po Obschestvennum naukam Akademii Nauk S.S.S.R. Nauchanaya Biblioteka im Gor'Kogo Moskovskogo ordena Lenina Gosudarstvennogo Universitetu Lenin State Library
Munich	Bayerische Statsbibliothek Shevchenko Scientific Society
Namur	Facultés de N. D. Université de la Paix
Newark (U.S.A.)	University of Delaware
New Haven	Yale University
New York	Metropolitan Museum of Art Public Library
Nuremberg	Germanische Nationalmuseum
Oslo	Det Norske Videnskaps Akademie i Oslo University
Paris	Institut de France University
Philadelphia	University of Pennsylvania
Plovdiv	Musée National
Porto	Universidade (Faculdade de Ciências do Porto)
Poznan	Instytut Prehistoryczny Uniwersytetu Instytut Zachodni Instytut Zachodnio-slowianski slowianski pozy Uniwersytecie Poznanskim Poznanskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciol Nauk
Providence (R.I.)	Brown University
Prague	Céska Akademi Véd a Uméni Narodni i Universitni Knihovna v Praze Narodni Museum Orientalni Ustav
Rome	Academia Nazionale dei Lincei Institutum Historicum F. F. (Praed Romae ad S. Sabinae) Istituto Storico Domenicano
Rome (Vatican City)	Pontificia Academia Scientiarum Societatis Jesu Vatican Library
San Marino (U.S.A.)	Henry E. Huntington Library & Art Gallery
Sarajevo	Istorisko Drustra Bosni I Hercegovine
Seattle	University of Washington
Sofia	Academie Bulgare des Sciences Bibliothèque de l'Université de Sofia Bulgarian Bibliographical Institute Institut Archéologique
Stockholm	Ostasiatiska Samlingarna Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademie
Strasbourg	University
Sydney	Linnean Society of N.S.W. Royal Australian Society Royal Society of N.S.W.
Sydney	University
Tenerife (Canary Is.)	La Laguna University
Toronto	Public Library University
Torun (Thurn)	Towarzystwo Naukowe u Toruniu
Uppsala	University
Urbana	University of Illinois

Utrecht	University
Vatican City	See Rome
Venice	Istituto Veneto di Scienze Lettere ed Arti
Victoria (B.C.)	Legislative Assembly of B.C.
Vienna	Oesterreichische Nationalbibliothek
Warsaw	Biblioteka Narodowa Instytut Historyczny (University of Warsaw) Muzeum Narodowe Sekcja Archiwalna Związku Bibliotekarzy
Washington	Library of Congress Smithsonian Institute
Wellington (N.Z.)	Polynesian Society
Worcester (Mass.)	Worcester Art Museum
Wrocław	Wrocławski Towarzystwo Miłośników Historii Wrocławskie Towarzystwo Naukowe
Zagreb	Povisjesno Drustvo Hrvatski University Library

Appendix 4

International Exchange of Government Official Publications, 1955⁴⁴

A. National Level

These are 'Value for Value' exchanges. British Government publications are supplied by H.M.S.O. to foreign depository libraries or centres and the Foreign/Commonwealth, etc. publications are supplied to the British Museum in exchange. There are comprehensive exchanges with some countries and with others only Parliamentary Publications are exchanged.

List of National Exchanges

Country	Year of operation	Year resumed if interrupted by World War II	Notes
Australia	1904		Long standing authority for complete exchange. P.P.s supplied and all N.P.P.s except certain agency items sold not published by H.M.S.O.
Australian States			
New South Wales	1894		Ditto.
S. Australia	1935		Long standing authority for complete exchange. Certain P.P.s supplied and N.P.P.s selected from monthly lists.
Tasmania	1883		Long standing authority for complete exchange. Certain P.P.s only supplied.
Queensland	1885		Long standing authority for complete exchange. Certain P.P.s supplied. N.P.P.s selected from monthly lists.
W. Australia	1908		Ditto.
Victoria	1886		Ditto.

⁴⁴ Undated Internal memo, probably 1955.

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Austria	1948		Limited exchange - mainly Parliamentary.
Belgium	1953		Serial publications to B.M. in exchange for selection from Annual Lists to equivalent value. We are still awaiting Belgian lists of requirements.
Bolivia*	1947		Exchange of Parliamentary reports only. Supply was suspended in 1954 as no receipts from Bolivia since 1948 issues.
Brazil	1948		Parliamentary and Non-Parliamentary exchange.
Canada	1883		Long standing authority for complete exchange. P.P.s supplied by Canada do not exercise their right to select N.P.P.s.
Ceylon	1949		Parliamentary only.
Colombia	1954		Small exchange with Colombian Statistical Office.
Czechoslovakia	1947		Parliamentary and Non-Parliamentary exchange.
Denmark	1911	1945	Comprehensive exchange Parliamentary and Non-Parliamentary (mostly on Standing Orders some selections made).
Federation of Rhodesia & Nyasaland	1955		Assumed to have same rights as other Commonwealth countries. Parliamentary Publications, Statutory Instruments and Colonial Numbered Reports supplied.
Finland	1923	1949	Limited exchange – Mainly Parliamentary.
France	1895	1946 Partly resumed	Two main exchanges (1) Complete – one copy of all P.P.S and N.P.P.s. (2) Exchange of Record Publications.
		1948 Record Exchange	
		1951 Fully Resumed	
Germany	pre 1914	1950	Mainly Parliamentary – includes a small exchange with Library in East German Sector of Berlin. Negotiation proceeding for a comprehensive central exchange with Federal Germany.
German States			
Baden-Wurttemberg	1950		Small exchange. H.C. Weekly Debates and P.G. Acts – for State legislation, etc.
Hesse	1950		Small exchange. H.C. Weekly Debates and some N.P.P.s for State legislation, etc.
Schleswig Holstein	1950		Small exchange. H.C. Weekly Debates, P.G. Acts, (separate) and Education Circulars - for State legislation, etc.

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Greece	1939	1948	Limited exchange. P.G. Acts (Volumes) supplied to Greek Ministry of Justice in exchange for Greek statistical publications received free by British Museum. Foreign Office are approaching Greek authorities to agree this as a formal exchange.
Hungary*	pre 1914	1948	Parliamentary and Statistical only. Supply suspended 1953 because only small receipts from Hungary. Foreign Office are negotiating in an attempt to obtain back issues and reach new agreement from 1 January, 1956. <u>(They may not have approached Hungarians yet.)</u>
India	1951		Comprehensive exchange. N.P.P.s and P.P.s on standing orders and selections from Monthly Lists. Exchange balanced periodically.
Israel	1952		Selections made from Monthly Lists.
Italy	1883	1949 Partly resumed	Parliamentary exchange.
Japan	1951 [?]	1949 Partly resumed fully 1954	Comprehensive exchange of Parliamentary and Non-Parliamentary publications – on standing orders.
Jugoslavia	1951		Comprehensive exchange. Parliamentary and Non-Parliamentary publications – on standing orders.
Netherlands	1883	1947	Comprehensive exchange P.P.s and N.P.P.s. Standing orders and selections from Official Lists. Provision for a Cash adjustment.
Newfoundland	1905		Small Parliamentary exchange only.
New Zealand	1883		Long standing authority for complete exchange. Certain P.P.s and N.P.P.s supplied and N.P.P.s selected from Monthly Lists.
Norway	1887	1947	Mainly Parliamentary exchange.
Pakistan	1955		Exchange of legal Publications for certain P.P.s and N.P.P.s. Negotiations for general exchange in progress.
Philippines	1948		Exchange of serial publications.
Poland+	1951		Three exchanges were in process of negotiation but apart from a few minor items supplied and received nothing happened. Negotiations left with B.M.
Portugal	1936		Extended 1955. Comprehensive exchange of P.P.s and N.P.P.s on standing orders.
Southern Rhodesia	1926		Long standing authority for complete exchange. P.P.s and N.P.P.s supplied on standing orders and other N.P.P.s selected from Monthly Lists.

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Spain	1955		Limited exchange P.P.s and N.P.P.s on standing orders.
Sweden	1904	1943	Mainly Parliamentary – limited N.P.P. exchange (about £6 annually from Sweden in exchange for three specific items).
State of Hyderabad	1954		Parliamentary Reports only.
Switzerland	1949		Mainly a Parliamentary exchange – on standing orders.
Turkey	1949		Limited exchange – Parliamentary and Statistical – on standing orders.
Union of South Africa	1913		All S. African Publications received under Copyright Act and certain Official Publications under Colonial Regulations. P.P.s supplied but right to select N.P.P.s from Monthly Lists not exercised.
United Nations and Associated Organisations	1947		P.P.s and N.P.P.s are supplied to U.N. Libraries, Geneva and New York on standing orders and ad hoc requests – in exchange for Publications supplied to F.O. The B.M. are also supplied as a depository Library by U.N. and associated organisations.
United States of America	1883		Both countries receive one copy of all official publications as issued. A subsidiary agreement allows for 3 additional copies to be supplied on request.
U.S.A. (States) Connecticut	About 1933		Parliamentary and State legislative exchange only – standing orders.
Uruguay	1952		Limited exchange – Parliamentary only – standing orders.
Venezuela	1951		Ditto.
40	Commonwealth, colonial and Foreign countries		
9	Commonwealth and Foreign States		
1	U.N. Libraries		
50	TOTAL		

* Denotes supply suspended

+ Denotes exchange not operating

B. General Notes

The 'value-for-value' exchanges fall into two broad categories:-

- (1) Serial Publications supplied by both sides on standing orders (the British Museum advises on equivalent values);
- (2) Selections which are balanced periodically. In some cases B.M. advises on value of receipts and in others priced invoices are converted to British equivalent.

British Library highlights film, 2014. The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom^[6] and the largest national library in the world by number of items catalogued. It is estimated to contain 150–200 million^{[7][8][3][4]} items from many countries. The British Library Act 1972 detached the library department from the museum, but it continued to host the now separated British Library in the same Reading Room and building as the museum until 1997. The collection supports research and development in UK, overseas and international industry, particularly in the pharmaceutical industry. British Library, national library of Great Britain, formed by the British Library Act (1972) and organized by July 1, 1973. For much of the 20th century its holdings were divided among the British Museum library (with some 12 million volumes) and several other buildings, but in 1997–98 a new. External Websites. Official Site of The British Library. The Official Site of the British Library. Britannica Websites. Articles from Britannica Encyclopedias for elementary and high school students. Reading Room of the British Museum, designed by Sidney Smirke in collaboration with Anthony Panizzi and built in the 1850s. Illustration by Smirke, from the Illustrated London News, 1857. Courtesy of the trustees of the British Museum; photograph, J.R. Freeman & Co. Ltd. The British Library (BL) is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world's largest libraries. Its collections include more than 150 million items, in over 400 languages including books, magazines, manuscripts, maps, music scores, newspapers, patents, databases, philatelic items, prints and drawings and sound recordings. BL is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. Documents. News and communications. Dame Carol Black Appointed as British Library Chair. 25 June 2018. News story. The British Museum, in the Bloomsbury area of London, England, is a public institution dedicated to human history, art and culture. Its permanent collection of some eight million works is among the largest and most comprehensive in existence, having been widely collected during the era of the British Empire. It documents the story of human culture from its beginnings to the present. It was the first public national museum in the world. The British Museum Great Russell St London WC1B 3DG. Map Data. Map data ©2017 Google. The chambers I am describing appear to have been a depository for such documents [historical records and public documents]. To the height of a foot or more from the floor they were entirely filled with them; some entire, but the greater part broken into fragments. Why is the Library important? Before the discovery of the Library, almost everything we knew about ancient Assyria came from stories in the Bible or classical historians. With the discovery of the Library, thousands of cuneiform texts were recovered, telling the Assyrians' story in their own words.